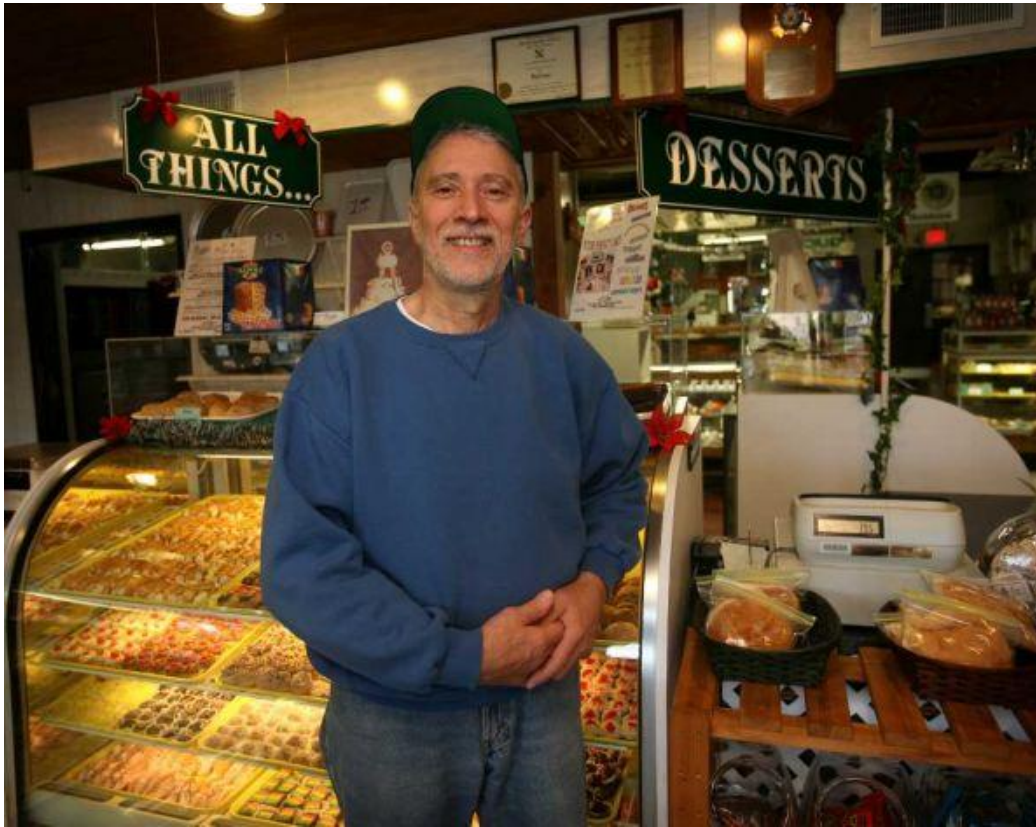


Owner of Luigi's plans 'progress'

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Published: 11:01 p.m., Monday, December 20, 2010



After a two year wait, Benny DiMarco, owner of Luigi's at 10 Broadway in Trumbull, received zoning approval for an expansion to his building which will include residential apartments as well as increased commercial space. Photo: Brian A. Pounds / Connecticut Post |

For [Benny DiMarco](#), owner of Luigi's Italian Pastry at 10 Broadway in Trumbull, "revitalization is progress."

And revitalizing [Long Hill Green](#), the area of town that his business calls home, has long been an ambition of DiMarco's.

That dream took a step toward reality Nov. 30, when he received approval from the city's planning and zoning commission to renovate the building where Luigi's resides and add eight one-bedroom apartments above the shop.

The adjoining [Franco Gianni](#)'s restaurant also would expand as part of the project, and DiMarco said he would like to add a free-standing business -- possibly a bank -- nearby at the corner of Whitney Avenue and Broadway. DiMarco estimates the work will cost about \$3 million.

The goal, DiMarco said, is to give the project the look and feel of a colonial village.

"This is a unique area," he said. "People love to see things being revitalized in this area."

Deborah Cox, the economic development director of Trumbull, said she's thrilled that the project got the go-ahead and believes it could be a boon for the town.

"It's really going to bring back the green and give it a new, updated look," she said. "I think Trumbull's people will be really proud of it."

The project has been in the works for roughly two years.

The approval process was complicated because the expansion involves mixed use of the property -- a fairly new concept in Trumbull, Cox said.

First, the planning and zoning commission approved the creation of a mixed-use zone that would allow for the inclusion of residential properties in retail and commercial areas. Then, that zone had to be applied to the properties in the project. Finally, the application needed approval.

Now that process is over, the real work begins. DiMarco said he's begun looking for financing, with the hopes of breaking ground on the renovations in the spring.

Although some neighbors expressed concerns about the expansion's impact on traffic and how it might affect the character of Long Hill Green, DiMarco and Cox said most people in the area support the expansion.

"It's definitely going to enhance the area," Cox said.